

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application as amended. No claims have been amended, cancelled, or added. Therefore, claims 1-27 are presented for examination.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Claim 1-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Attwood, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,347,376 (“Attwood”).

Attwood discloses “*Ipsec rules are searched in order from rules containing the most specificity of attributes to those containing the least specificity of attributes . . . [e]ach such group is searched with an enhanced search mechanism, such as a search tree. Searching is further improved by searching at layers higher than the IP layer*” (Abstract; emphasis provided). Attwood further discloses “a comparison of the value of the global instance count word IC to the value of IC saved in the connection memory block when the connection is first established. If IC has changed, the *static rules are also searched . . . [a]gain, the searching of the static rules after a connection is established is avoided, unless the instances count changes indicating a modification of one or more of the static rules*” (col. 11, lines 46-63; emphasis provided).

Attwood further discloses “searching of the security database is further improved by *searching the database at layers higher than the IP layer*” and “*searching of the Ipsec rules to be performed generally only when a connection is first established*” and “[s]ince the TCP package is part of a connection, *Ipsec rule searching at the higher TCP layer allows the search to occur only at the beginning of a connection*” (col. 3, lines 71-19, 38-40; col. 8, lines 57-60; emphasis provided). Attwood further discloses “[f]or outgoing TCP and UDP packages, the *searching of the static rule table is performed at the TCP*

and UDP layers and the security rule binding information is attached to these packets at the higher layer” (col. 9, lines 30-34; emphasis provided).

Applicant respectfully submits Attwood relates to reducing the number of *searches that may be required for IPsec operations*, and nowhere does Attwood disclose “preventing the connection request from proceeding if no active security association exists to protect the network flow” as recited by claim 1 (emphasis provided). Stated differently, Attwood discloses performing various searches relating to IPsec operations, but does not disclose preventing the erroneous packet transmissions from happening in the first place, as recited by claim 1. Nikander, like Attwood, does not disclose or reasonably suggest preventing data from being transmitted in the absence of a defined security associates to prevent the occurrence of erroneous packet transmissions. Hence, Nikander adds nothing relevant to Attwood at least with regard to claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims.

Claim 10, 17, 20 and 24 contain limitations similar to those of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10, 17, 20 and 24 and their dependent claims.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of the claims is hereby earnestly requested.

Invitation for a Telephone Interview

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request for an Extension of Time

Applicant respectfully petitions for a One-Month extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a) for such an extension.

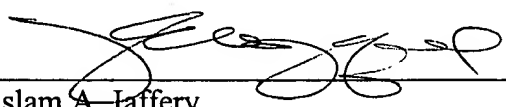
Charge our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 25, 2005



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